

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2215

ADDIS FOR CALDWELL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, SU, US

SUBJECT: SWTUF BREAK WITH AALC CONNECTED TO LEADERSHIP

AND POLICY DISPUTE

REF: KHARTOUM 2158

BEGIN SUMMARY: SWTUF DECISION TO SEVER RELATIONS WITH AMERICAN LABOR, NOW FORMALLY ANNOUNCED, AROSE FROM OPPOSITION WITHIN SWTUF TO PRESIDENT GINAWI'S OPENNESS TOWARD U.S.

AND WESTERN LABOR MOVEMENTS AS WELL AS FROM ALLEGED AFL-CIO POSITION VIS-A-VIS ISRAEL AND PALESTINIANS. IN ADDITION,

PERSONAL RIVALRIES WITHIN SWTUF LEADERSHIP DURING PRE-ELECTION PERIOD APPEAR HAVE PLAYED A ROLE IN SWTUF DECISION.

EMBASSY AGAIN RECOMMENDS THAT AALC BE ENCOURAGED SEEK DIRECT CLARIFICATION FROM SWTUF AND, IF WARRANTED, REVIEW STATUS OF AALC ASSISTANCE COMMITMENTS TO SWTUF. END SUMMARY.

1. ARABIC PRESS SEPT. 17 PUBLISHED OFFICIAL STATEMENT RELEASED BY MOHAMMED OSMAN GAMAA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SUDAN WORKERS TRADE UNION FEDERATION (SWTUF), WHICH CONFIRMED EARLIER REPORT OF SWTUF DECISION TO SEVER RELATIONS WITH AMERICAN ORGANIZED LABOR (REFTEL). STATEMENT NOTES
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THAT SWTUF SOUGHT GOOD RELATIONS WITH AMERICANS IN 1974 IN

CONFORMITY WITH POLICY OF OPENNESS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS;
THAT IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT U.S. LABOR HAS BEEN DEALING WITH
ISRAEL, THUS REFLECTING THE FACE OF IMPERIALISM; THAT
SWTUF CENTRAL COMMITTEE THEREFORE CONCLUDES THAT ITS POLICY
OF OPENNESS SHOULD NOT APPLY TO THE U.S.; AND FINALLY, THAT
AGREEMENTS BETWEEN SUDANESE AND AMERICAN LABOR ORGANIZATIONS
SHOULD BE TERMINATED.

2. EMBASSY IS INFORMED BY MEMBER OF SWTUF CENTRAL COMMITTEE
THAT SMOLDERING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GAMAA AND SWTUF PRESIDENT
ABDALLA NASR GINAWI HAD FLARED AT SEPT. 12 CENTRAL COMMITTEE
MEETING. GAMAA HAD REPORTEDLY OPPOSED GINAWI'S 1974
TRIP TO THE U.S. AT THE INVITATION OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN

LABOR CENTER (AALC) AND, SUBSEQUENTLY, GINAWI'S PARTICIPATION
IN THE BRUSSELS ICFTU-SPONSORED SEMINAR ON THE LOME
CONVENTION THAT FOLLOWED LAST MAY'S ILO MEETING IN GENEVA.
IT IS ALSO SAID THAT GAMAA HAS ACCUSED GINAWI OF HAVING
POCKETED PROCEEDS FROM THE OPERATIONS OF TWO RESTAURANTS
THAT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THE SWTUF AFTER THEN HAD BEEN CONFIS-
CATED FROM GREEK OWNERS IN 1971.

3. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, GINAWI DEFENDED HIMSELF AGAINST
ALL BUT LATTER CHARGE AT THE SEPT. 12 CENTRAL COMMITTEE
MEETING. GINAWI RECALLED THAT HIS US VISIT HAD BEEN AGREED
TO UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THAT IT WAS
IN LINE WITH SWTUF POLICY OF EXTENDING RELATIONS IN ALL
DIRECTIONS. HE ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID THAT UNION
REPRESENTATIVES FROM MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES ATTENDED THE
BRUSSELS SEMINAR AND THAT AFRICAN SOLIDARITY RATHER THAN
ICFTU'S ALLEGED RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL WAS THE CONTROLLING FACTOR.
FINALLY, WE ARE TOLD THAT GINAWI CHARGED THAT GAMAA WAS
BEING SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED IN HIS OPPOSITION
BY "PRO-EGYPTIAN" ELEMENTS. SOURCE TELLS US THAT MOHAMMED
HASSAN ABDALLA, SWTUF VICE PRESIDENT AND HEAD OF THE
RAILROAD WORKERS UNION, TRIED
TO CALM THE DISPUTE BUT DID
NOTHING TO SUPPORT GINAWI. CENTRAL COMMITTEE SUBSEQUENTLY
VOTED TO DISCONTINUE RELATIONS WITH US LABOR.

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4. COMMENT. GINAWI AND GAMAA HAD BEEN WORKING COLLEAGUES
IN THE SWTUF FOR MANY YEARS UNTIL RELATIONS BEGAN TO
DETERIORATE ABOUT ONE YEAR AGO, IN PART BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES
OVER THE DESIRABILITY OF ACCEPTING THE AALC INVITATION. AT
THAT TIME, GAMAA REPORTEDLY SHIFTED HIS ALLEGIANCE TO
ABDALLA, WHO IS EXPECTED TO CHALLENGE GINAWI IN THE SWTUF
ELECTIONS THIS NOVEMBER. AS THE LEADER OF THIRTY THOUSAND
RAILROAD WORKERS, ABDALLA WILL BE A FORMIDABLE OPPONENT

TO GINAWI, WHO HEADS ONLY THE FIFTY OR SO UNION DRIVERS WHO WORK FOR THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DEPARTMENT. GINAWI THUS HAS NO POWER BASE WITHIN THE LABOR MOVEMENT AND OWES HIS CURRENT POSITION TO HIS APPOINTMENT BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI IN 1973. IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT THE SUDANESE SOCIALIST UNION AND PERHAPS NIMEIRI PERSONALLY WILL PLAY A ROLE IN DETERMINING CANDIDATES IN THE SWTUF ELECTIONS. THE SWTUF ACTION IN SEVERING ITS AMERICAN TIES CONFORMS WITH NEITHER NIMEIRI'S MODERATE MIDDLE EAST POLICY NOR HIS GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US. WHILE GINAWI'S MORE OR LESS UNFRIENDLY REFERENCE TO EGYPT WILL PRESUMABLY NOT SIT WELL WITH NIMEIRI, LATTER MAY WELL DECIDE TO INTERVENE IN SWTUF AFFAIRS SO AS TO PREVENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE DECISION FROM SPILLING OVER INTO GENERAL AREA OF US-SUDANESE RELATIONS. UNTIL THIS HAPPENS, HOWEVER, WE ARE STUCK WITH

DEFINITELY UNFRIENDLY PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON PART OF SWTUF TOWARD AMERICAN ORGANIZED LABOR. WE DO NOT THINK THAT AALC CAN AFFORD TO IGNORE SWTUF STATEMENT, PARTICULARLY SINCE IT ADDRESSES ITSELF DIRECTLY TO THE QUESTION OF ASSISTANCE. IN THIS REGARD, WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING THE STATUS OF AALC'S PROMISED SHIPMENT OF MEDICINES AND OTHER MATERIAL TO THE SWTUF.

5. ACTION REQUESTED. PLEASE INFORM AALC LEADERSHIP OF SUBSTANCE THIS MESSAGE AND ADVISE EMBASSY WHAT RESPONSE OR OTHER ACTION AALC CONTEMPLATES. BREWER

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